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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USNATO 000510

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR RPM, SRAP, EAP

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [NATO](#) [AF](#) [PK](#) [KS](#)

SUBJECT: SOUTH KOREA WANTS TO DEPLOY PRT TO PARWAN; SEEKS
U.S. SUPPORT

REF: A. SEOUL 1787

[1](#)B. NOVEMBER 6 LETTER FROM ROK MFA TO NATO SECRETARY
GENERAL

[1](#)C. STATE 115253

Classified By: D/PolAd Alejandro Baez for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: On November 10, South Korean Minister Counselor Kim Hong-Kyun demarched USNATO personnel, informing them of Seoul's strong preference to deploy its recently announced Provincial Reconstruction Team to Parwan Province, Afghanistan. Kim requested U.S. support in this matter, citing synergies with the existing Korean medical and vocational training team in the region. Kim also asked whether the Republic of Korea might be able to participate in the proposed ISAF-format meeting at the December 3-4 NATO Foreign Ministerial. END SUMMARY

[1](#)2. (C) Minister Counselor Kim Hong-Kyun of the Republic of Korea (ROK) Embassy in Brussels demarched the Mission on November 10 to request U.S. support for Korea's strong preference to deploy its newly announced Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) to Parwan Province, Afghanistan. The ROK hopes to fix Parwan as its deployment location and complete an initial survey of possible PRT venues when Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Lee Yong-Joon leads a team from Seoul to Afghanistan November 12 or 13 to consult with Commander of ISAF General McChrystal and Afghan officials. Kim asked that the U.S. advocate the ROK's position in discussions with NATO Allies and ISAF Headquarters. He added that his counterparts would deliver a similar demarche in Washington.

[1](#)3. (C) Kim announced that Seoul sent a formal offer to the NATO Secretary General, copied to the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), on November 6, announcing the ROK's intent to establish a PRT consisting of 50-70 civilians, 30-50 police officers, and 200-400 infantry soldiers to serve as force protection (ref A). He emphasized that the new PRT, regardless of location, would not join "patrolling missions." As a result, the ROK thought the best way to build synergy with existing programs in Afghanistan would be to deploy its new forces and civilians to join its existing medical and vocational teams. The ROK would then relocate its entire operation (currently at Bagram Air Base)

to Parwan province. Kim was concerned that the U.S. might see this move as duplicating efforts, since the U.S.-led PRT in Bagram currently covers both Parwan and Kapisa provinces. He added, though, that in a meeting November 7 with NATO Senior Civilian Representative Fernando Gentilini and COMISAF Political Advisor Jacob McFerren, the ROK Ambassador in Kabul was led to believe that a Korean full-PRT presence in Parwan might enable the U.S.-led PRT Bagram to concentrate its efforts in Kapisa. Kim took this as a positive signal that the U.S. and the ROK could come up with a workable division of labor and coordination plan through ISAF Headquarters.

14. (C) While expressing thanks for the significant contribution being offered by ROK, D/PolAd Baez informed Kim that he was not in a position to respond substantively to Seoul's request. He promised to pass the information to Washington and Embassy Kabul.

Interested in ISAF Meeting in December

15. (C) Kim asked whether the upcoming December 3-4 meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers would include an ISAF-format discussion. Seoul plans to send Foreign Minister Yu to visit NATO Secretary General Rasmussen in Brussels December 7-9 to sign the security agreement for information sharing between the ROK and NATO, Kim continued. He acknowledged that his minister's visit would come after the NATO Foreign Ministers' meeting, but said that other NATO officials had told him that the ROK may be permitted to attend an ISAF-format meeting of

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Foreign Ministers December 3-4 given the ROK's current status as a "potential non-NATO troop contributor," and its nearly completed work to finalize the security arrangements. Kim said his government had not decided whether it wanted to attend such a meeting, but wanted to know if it would be possible. He added that the ROK had named Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Lee Yong-Joon, who will lead the PRT survey team to Kabul this week, Korea's Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. Seoul would like Lee to be included in future Af-Pak special envoys' meetings.

DAALDER